



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,  
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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## THE "P.R." LETTER BAG.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of Correspondents.]

DEAR EDITOR,—

Oh! women with children dear!  
Oh! men with mothers and wives!  
It is not *leather* we're wearing out,  
But human creatures lives.

[See page 116 of *Parents' Review* for April, 1894.]

Who is to blame? All of us. Not one dare lay the flattering unction to his soul that he has neither part nor lot in this scene of human misery and wrong.

First the unhappy parents. When will men and women learn that to bring children into the world, to suffer from want of food or from the life-long torture of inherited disease is a sin? Let us be gentle and indulgent towards such for the present. They are ignorant and human; they neither foresee nor forbear.

Next the wretch who, directly or indirectly piles up a fortune wrung from the heart's blood of his down-trodden brothers and sisters. Where is he? Track him out, set him in the light; hold him up to universal execration! Many a man, who in a fit of jealousy or rage, or intoxication deals a deadly blow to his fellow, is not as great a criminal as he!

Laws are powerless to make men just and humane, and religion of the kind most in vogue has failed to do so yet, but in human hate and contempt there is a force before which such incarnations of greed and selfishness must shrink and shrivel out of sight. We are told to forgive *our own enemies*, not the oppressors of the weak. Christ himself poured out his wrath upon them. "Woe unto you," "for ye devour widows' houses." "Woe unto you," "for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne." And is this the way of the world? *Our* way towards those who grow rich by grinding the faces of the poor? Look around. The man of wealth, however come by, is honored, flattered, toadied. We want his money if we despise *him*. The minister of religion wants it for Christ's church. The philanthropist wants it—there's a new wing to add to the asylum—and Mr. Grindem will head the subscription with £100 or £1,000, he will not miss his money. So hat in hand we go, the best of us, to beseech him to disgorge. For this very morning you saw something borne across the platform to a railway carriage. What was it? Something tied up in a sack—nothing visible but a human head, a frenzied face, wild eyes and floating grey hair; it is on its way to that over-crowded asylum. That something was once an honest, loving wife and mother. How came she to this hideous wreck so infinitely worse than death? Overwork, want of sleep and food, loss of husband and children, 14 hours a day and ninepence a dozen—despair, drink! You

don't know her, generous donor to the asylum. No, but she knew you. She is the sweater's victim. All those oppressed human beings whom death unkindly spares, drag out supported by your bounty and the bounty of society, existences which, but for the sacredness of human life, pity itself, would terminate.

Ah, yes, with tears in our eyes and fire in our hearts at the wrongs of our poor oppressed kinsfolk, we applaud the munificence of their author, we humour him, we court him, and finally we do him the great honour of sending him to represent us in Parliament. But the avenger comes on him, on us, on all. The pampered sons of the newly-rich, lost in pleasure and vice, drop from their nerveless hands the fruits of so much sin, and memories of bitter wrong borne by this generation or the preceding generation, divide those whom interest and work should bind together for their common good. So capital and labour face each other in deadly hate, and society suffers, every member of it for its endorsement of the anti-Christian dogma. that wealth, not charity, covereth a multitude of sins.

E.M.

DEAR EDITOR,—I do not know if the following idea would be novel to any of the readers of the "P.R.," but I have not seen anything of the kind suggested, and as it affords endless occupation to my own children, there may be others who would be able and wishful to adopt it. What I speak of is a garden hut for the children built of stone or wood, with a fire-place, and better still with an oven also. Our hut is about 9 feet square, made of wood against an old stone garden wall, with a hearth fire to burn wood. It has a door (with padlock) and two tiny windows—one at each end. It has a let down table and shelves, and the boys have provided stools, boxes, brackets and cupboard. They have had several presents, and they have freely spent their own pocket money in buying such pots and pans as they wanted, doing their own shopping! They have all necessary utensils, towels, &c., so that nothing need be borrowed from the cook except materials for cooking. They have only a dutch oven, but it has cooked little birds and pastry! A frying pan has poached eggs and fried potatoes, and a steamer has brought forth quite excellent potatoes and apples! In all weathers it is an endless resource, for in the depths of winter the cosy fire, the cooking, the gathering and chopping sticks, &c., supply every variety of healthy amusement. It is the children's kingdom, and it is their pride and pleasure to keep it in good order, and to entertain their elders! (who wonderfully escape indigestion and poisoning!)

"CAMPAGNA."

DEAR EDITOR,—May I be allowed to suggest that the author of the interesting article on Children's Books in the March number of the "P.R." has possibly not seen an edition of the bible called the Child's Bible. I am sorry I can give no information as to the publisher. It was several years ago that I saw a copy, but it seems to me exactly to answer the description given in a paragraph on page 21. It was simply an

edition of the bible with many passages and even whole chapters *left out*, and it had, if I remember rightly, some good pictures. I am sorry this is such a vague suggestion, but people who think such a book desirable would probably find no difficulty in meeting with it.

E. M. Y.

DEAR EDITOR,—In Mrs. Bryant's list of books for a Children's Library, I am glad to see the names of many old friends. But I am surprised to find that none of Henty's works are included in the list, though Mrs. Bryant makes one short allusion to them in her article. Mayne Reid is rather a dangerous author to recommend for children, though several of his works are harmless as well as exciting. Is the "Idylls of the King" a judicious selection?

F. H.

DEAR EDITOR,—When reading this month's *Parents' Review*, I was much interested in Mrs. Bryant's article upon suitable reading for children.

I take the liberty of forwarding the names of some story books, which we find are very popular with our small friends. "The Angel of Love," by L. T. Meade, Hodder and Stoughton. "Pickles," by Yotty Osborn, John F. Shaw and Co., 48, Paternoster Row. "The Three Little Spades," by Anna Warner, James Nisbet and Co., Berners Street, W. "Granny's Wonderful Chair," by Francis Browne (fairy tales), Griffith and Farren. "Leila," or "The Island—in England and at Home," by Ann Fraser Tytler, G. Routledge and Sons, Broadway, Ludgate Hill. "Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth," by "A Layman," Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., Ltd., Paternoster House, Charing Cross Road. For boys of from 12 to 14, I find Manville Fenn's stories liked. I think they are published by Blackie and Sons, Ltd., Old Bailey, E.C.

M. C. CAMPBELL.

DEAR EDITOR,—I should like to have the opinion of the readers of your magazine on the best way of educating children in orderly habits.

I have tried the experiment with my children of giving them a box of bricks, out of which I take *one* brick. I give it to the child and I find that a child who has never seen a box of bricks turned out naturally tries to replace the brick. I put it away for him, then let him take it out and try to put it away. A child will amuse himself in this way often for an hour, and enjoys himself quite as much, if not more, than in knocking down a castle built for him. The next day I take two bricks out for him, and let him have gradually more and more out each day until he has learned to put away the contents of the whole box. For some time his only idea of amusement is putting away the bricks. When he can do this quite easily, I teach him to build with them. As he grows older, when he is tired of the bricks and wants a new toy, he has first to put away the bricks before another toy is given him. Very soon he gets into the habit of putting away his first toy before asking for another.

RINA SCOTT.

DEAR EDITOR,—It seems to me a pity that a very good Training Home for Ladies who desire to be prepared for Colonial life or for a useful life at home, should not be more widely known. Having myself experienced the value of Miss Mitchell's Home and teaching, I desire to make it known to others. Fryerne is a farm house in the pretty country  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Caterham Station. Miss Mitchell there receives 6 or 8 ladies and instructs them in all branches of domestic economy. They do their own cooking, dairy work, house work and a little washing. A course of first-rate instruction in dressmaking is given occasionally.

The situation is most healthy, the terms very moderate. It would often be a valuable addition to the education of our girls if they could spend six months or a year in such a Home after leaving school and thus become as thoroughly cultivated, in the best sense, as Miss Mitchell contrives to make those under her care, while for ladies preparing for colonial life the advantage is obviously very great. Trusting to make this useful place better known through your kind help.

E. HEDLEY.

DEAR EDITOR,—In answer to Mrs. McLachlan I should like to say that my little girls have always loved "Little Susy's Six Birthdays," by Mrs. Prentice, also "Little Susy's Servants" by the same author, when they have been four or five years old. I never read to boys of four, but told them simple versions of the old fairy tales. You must look at a child to arrest his attention, and this is impossible when reading aloud. "Lear's Book of Nonsense" is delightful for small boys.

MATER.

DEAR EDITOR,—Plant the oak tree in a pot, or in the earth, quite covering the acorn, and water from time to time. I hope Mrs. Thompson will find this as satisfactory as we have done.

E. WARD.